Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A topical composition comprising: about 5% to about 25% (w/v) ascorbic acid; a non-toxic zinc salt; and water, wherein

the composition has a pH of about 3.5 to about 4.1;

the composition does not comprise tyrosine; and

the composition is prepared by a process comprising:

(a) dissolving about 10% to about 50% of the ascorbic acid in water at a temperature of between about 60°C to about 90°C to provide an aqueous ascorbic acid solution of at least 20% (w/v);

(b) cooling the aqueous ascorbic acid solution to below about 40°C;

(c) combining the aqueous ascorbic acid solution with water, a non-toxic zinc salt, and ascorbic acid to provide a mixture comprising water, a non-toxic zinc salt, and about 5% to about 25% (w/v) ascorbic acid; and

(d) adjusting the pH of the mixture to about 3.5 to about 4.1.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the composition has a pH of about 3.7 to about 4.0 and the pH is adjusted to about 3.7 to about 4.0 in step (d).

4. (Original) The composition of claim 1, further comprising an anti-inflammatory compound.

5. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 4, wherein the anti-inflammatory compound is a sulfur-containing anti-inflammatory compound.

6. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 5, wherein the sulfur-containing anti-inflammatory compound is cystine, cysteine, N-acetylcysteine, glutathione, cysteamine, S-methylcysteine, or methionine.

7. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 4, wherein the anti-inflammatory compound is an aminosugar.

8. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 7, wherein the aminosugar is glucosamine, mannosamine, N-acetylmannosamine, galactosamine, glucosamine-6-phosphate, N-acetylglucosamine, N-acetylmannosamine, or N-acetylgalactosamine.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the water is distilled water, deionized water, or distilled deionized water.

11. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the non-toxic zinc salt is present in the topical composition in an amount ranging from about 0.5% to about 5% (w/v).

12. (Original) The composition of claim 11, wherein the non-toxic zinc salt is zinc sulfate.

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the water is distilled or deionized water.

16. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 1, further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

17. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 15, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is alkyleneglycol, hydroxyalkylcellulose or a mixture thereof.

18-20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, further comprising a stimulant of protein synthesis.

22-23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, comprising about 15% to about 25% (w/v) ascorbic acid.

25. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the topical composition is an aqueous solution, a serum, a lotion, an ointment, a cream, or a gel.

26-35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, comprising about 10% to about 25% (w/v) ascorbic acid.

37. (New) The composition of claim 1, wherein the aqueous ascorbic acid solution of step (a) has a pH of about 2.0 to about 2.5.